

Apache County – Crooked Nail Trail Planning Meeting
November 17, 2016 Town of Eagar Town Hall 1 pm to 3 pm

MEETING NOTES

Attendees: Jeremiah Loyd, Ben Dugdale, Ron Sheperd, Adam Milnor, Diane Tilton, Nancy Huser, Chris Compton, Doug Wolfe, Mel Schweigart, Christine Chiesl, Pam Jaramillo

AGENDA

- Alignment
- Next steps for planning/permitting/construction
- Public outreach

General Notes and Questions

- Diane Tilton attended the meeting. She is the public information officer for the Arizona Game and Fish Department based in Pinetop.
- Chris Compton attended the meeting for the first time. He's an interested local resident who uses motorized trails.
- Assistance from the National Park Service (Adam Milnor) has been extended into spring to get through the planning portion of the project
- Night time riding – prohibited, encouraged? (Doug Wolfe)
 - This may be a concern for some ranchers along the route
 - Not prohibited since it is a public route, especially on roads, but it could be discouraged to prevent issues
- How can we make sure that we connect into Eagar? (Chris Chiesl)
 - This should be a priority from a marketing and economic development standpoint
 - The “road to nowhere” by the airport may be a good opportunity for that, and would allow for Highway 260 connections

Alignment Discussion

- *General discussion summary* – based on several factors including scenery, access to Eagar/Springerville and possible limitations with the Lyman Ditch, the group agreed to prioritize the River Route for evaluation and further study at this meeting.
- There is a need to select an alignment soon for the purposes of the Arizona State Parks OHV grant and to move forward on obtaining a Right of Way from Arizona State Land Department.
- **Old St Johns Highway Route**
 - From a user perspective this route is not very interesting, but the river route is promising (Chris Compton)
 - Lyman Irrigation Ditch – report from Devin Brown, unable to attend
 - Was presented to Grover Hill Irrigation Company legal counsel
 - No immediate negative response, but some concerns with possible increase in litigation even considering recreational use statute
 - Improvement needed for recreational access would be substantial
 - Some discussion of limiting days of use (i.e. Saturdays only)
 - Will be brought to board of directors for discussion
 - Arizona State Trust Land Rights of Way
 - Butterfly easements, or those that are on section corners may be attainable

- Becker Lake as a staging area
 - Still a possibility, but more follow up and planning would need to happen
 - Would need to consult AZGFD staff in Phoenix
- Alternative staging area
 - Is it possible to use different access off of Becker Lake Road, through Springerville property to connect to state trust land?
- Arizona State Trust Land
 - There is an existing Hopi lease to the west of Becker Lake/airport, they will need to be contacted (Chris Chiesl agreed to follow up)
- ***River Route***
 - Proposed staging area would be the rest area on Highway 60
 - Some private property is surrounding the rest area
 - Debra will follow up with landowner surrounding rest area
 - Could the Highway 60 ROW be used so that private property would not have to be used?
 - Would need to contact ADOT to determine width, allowable use
 - Exiting Road 4162
 - This is one of the challenging locations for the route
 - State Trust Land comes within about 125' of the highway, which may be within the public easement
 - Getting off of 4162 wherever possible is a good idea
 - Could offer a connection to Lyman Lake State Park, would need additional scouting
 - River Springs Ranch
 - Still need to confirm whether policy allows public access through the ranches
 - Roads are not maintained by the county
 - Important note that numbered roads do not necessarily have public access or are maintained by the county
 - Apache County roads have been indexed prior to 1984, everything before then is in paper form and not searchable in digital format
 - Makes it difficult to determine whether a public easement exists – can we get more clarification on whether there are easements available?

Major follow ups on the River Route

- Landowner relations/concerns – Ben and Debra will approach local landowners and the Natural Resource Conservation District about the best way to get through the road 4162 area
 - The status of Coyote Creek will also be discussed
 - Adam will produce a map for reference
- Exiting TEP road feasibility, and excessive speeds (likely to require a professional boundary survey, but Ben can go take some initial estimates)
- Archeology and cultural resources concerns – Paula from Arizona State Parks indicated this is a rich area for cultural resources. Adam and Jeremiah will reach out about having a meeting with her and other archeologists to discuss route.
- ***Central Route***
 - Access across TEP still the major hurdle
 - The northern portion of the central route could be combined with the River Route to connect to road 6040
- ***Easternmost Route***
 - This route seems feasible, but is remote and is not the most preferred route at this time

- Jeremiah made a request to ASLD about an existing easement on this route, and have not gotten a response

Outreach and Coordination

- ***Intergovernmental Agreement***

- A draft copy has been provided from Eagar to Apache County
 - Ben D. will forward on county supervisors and council
- Jeremiah will send the latest copy to Paul Ramsey with St Johns and get Paul's feedback on presenting to St Johns
- Debra can bring up the project with Eagar Town Council
- Ron will reach out to Doyle Shanley, new county supervisor

- ***Public Outreach***

- Need to provide the public a chance to review the proposed route before specific on-the-ground planning is done
- Current proposal is to combine a public meeting/planning meeting (i.e. 6pm to 8pm) once a general route is identified and materials can be prepared
 - Print maps, with a portion of the meeting open house format
 - Spread the word via paper, social media, utilize public information officers

Next meeting: Thursday, December 8th at 1 pm

Future Agenda Items:

- Report back on River Route findings
- More detailed discussion of public outreach